

FAITHFUL ALLEGIANCE

REFLECTING OVER AL-WALA WAL-BARA



ICAN SAMA-O-BASR PUBLICATIONS

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Sama-O-Basr

لِوَجْهِهِ أَللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَرَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا

Only for Allah's pleasure! We neither seek reward from you nor thanks.

(Published in Jun 2025)

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1. Introduction to the Book



1.1 About the Topic:

Al-Walā' wal-Barā' is not a marginal or abstract subject – it is among the clear obligations found in the Qur'an and must be understood as part of living Islamically with conviction and clarity.

Because this concept sits at the crossroads of 'aqīdah and identity, it affects not just belief but also how a Muslim relates to people, ideas, and causes.

If it is indeed an obligation, then every believer has a responsibility to:

- Understand it correctly through the lens of the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah.
- Guard against common misinterpretations that can lead either to misplaced harshness or dangerous compromise.

Love – when extended to those who oppose Allah, His Messenger ﷺ, His guidance, and the believer – can potentially nullify one's īmān.

Hate – when directed at people who do not deserve it; or if expressed unjustly – can lead to oppression and personal misguidance resulting in significant consequences in this world and the next.

Both are serious dangers. This booklet aims to offer a sound and

balanced understanding of Al-Walā' wal-Barā' in the light of the Quran and Sunnah, so the believers may walk the path of loyalty and disavowal with knowledge, sincerity, and justice.

1.2 How This Booklet Is Organized

This booklet is structured to guide the reader toward a clear understanding of the topic by exploring the following four aspects:

- **First**, we explore why this topic is important — particularly in light of Qur'anic obligations and its connection to the completeness of faith. Recognizing its significance, in shā' Allāh, will deepen our motivation to seek a correct and balanced understanding. This foundation is essential to appreciate the relevance of Al-Walā' wal-Barā' in shaping a sincere and principled Islamic life.
- **Second**, we provide a broad outline of what Al-Walā' wal-Barā' means, including its linguistic, theological, and practical dimensions. This helps establish conceptual clarity before diving into evidence or application.
- **Third**, we address common misconceptions—both from outside Islam and within the Muslim community—clarifying where the doctrine has been misunderstood or misused. This step is necessary to separate authentic guidance from distortions that have caused confusion or imbalance.
- **Fourth**, we present the correct approach to this concept, rooted in Qur'an and Sunnah, and explore its practical implications for our daily lives, relationships, and identity. This helps translate belief into action in a way that is principled, purposeful, and just.

To help absorb and retain the content, the reader may find it useful to visualize four mental compartments, placing each set of ideas in

its relevant place as the discussion unfolds. This simple structure supports better comprehension and lasting benefit, especially in a topic that involves both heart and mind.

Our aim is to offer clarity without oversimplification, and balance without compromise — grounding every point firmly in the sources of Islam.

2. Importance of The Concept of Al-Walā' wal-Barā'



This section highlights why Al-Walā' wal-Barā' is an incredibly important part of Islamic belief. It is closely tied to the sincerity and completeness of a believer's faith, as demonstrated by clear evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah.

While many proofs can be presented to show its significance, we will suffice with three key evidences, in keeping with our goal to keep this booklet brief and accessible.

2.1 Requirement for the completion of Iman

The Prophet ﷺ clearly described the inner structure of a complete believer. He said:

مَنْ أَحَبَّ اللَّهَ وَأَبْغَضَ اللَّهَ، وَأَعْطَى اللَّهَ وَمَنَعَ اللَّهَ فَقَدِ اسْتَكْمَلَ الْإِيمَانُ

"Whoever loves for the sake of Allah, hates for the sake of Allah, gives for the sake of Allah, and withholds for the sake of Allah – has perfected faith." Narrated by Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī; graded hasan by al-Albānī [Hidāyat al-Ruwāt, no. 29]

This hadith shows that loyalty and disavowal – when grounded sincerely in one's relationship with Allah – are not optional emotional states. They are part of what shapes a mature and complete level of imān.

So, for anyone who is keen to complete his imān, it is essential to

understand this topic – and we hope this booklet will serve as a useful guide in that regard.

2.2 A Clear Warning: Loyalty Shapes Identity:

Among the strongest Qur'anic warnings related to Al-Walā' wal-Barā' is the danger of forming allegiance (i.e. a relationship of Al-Walā') with those who oppose the core of Islamic belief. Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى أَوْلِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ
بَعْضٍ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الظَّالِمِينَ

"O you who believe! Do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies (Awlia). They are allies of one another. And whoever among you takes them as allies – then he is indeed one of them. Verily, Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people." (Surah Al-Mā'idah, 5:51)

The phrase "then he is indeed one of them" is not merely descriptive – it is a powerful statement about how misplaced loyalty can affect a person's religious identity. This does not mean every interaction is prohibited, but it firmly warns that aligning one's inner loyalty and support with those who reject Allah's guidance brings a person dangerously close to their path.

This ayah lays the groundwork for understanding that Walā' is not a neutral act. It has spiritual consequences. It reflects the direction of the heart, and ultimately, where one belongs.

2.3 A Glad Tiding: Victory Belongs to the Party of Allah

While the Qur'an warns against misplaced allegiance, it also offers a powerful glad tiding for those who align themselves with Allah, His Messenger, and the believers in the relationship of Al-Walā'. Allah says:

وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ عَامَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَلِيلُونَ

"And whoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and the believers as allies – then indeed, the party of Allah (Hizb Allah) are the victorious." (Surah Al-Mā'idah, 5:56)

It is a reminder that no matter how dominant falsehood may seem in the short term, it is the allies of truth – Hizb Allāh – who will ultimately prevail. This divine assurance offers reassurance, dignity, and moral courage to every believer who prioritizes faith over fear, and principle over popularity.

3. Understanding the Terms: Al-Walā' and al-Barā'



Now that we have understood the importance of the topic, we move to the second major section of this booklet – to clarify what is actually meant by Al-Walā' wal-Barā', before addressing the misconceptions and practical implications.

This part focuses solely on the linguistic and conceptual foundations, helping the reader establish clarity in definitions before moving forward.

3.1 Al-Walā' (الولاء)

The root word ﴿ (waliya) means "to be near, to be close, to follow without interruption."

Linguistically, al-Walā' and at-tawālī imply that:

Two or more things come in succession with no barrier between them.

This closeness, depending on the context, can refer to:

- Physical proximity
- Blood relation
- Religious loyalty and alliance
- Support, love, and emotional alignment

From this, **al-wilāyah** (الولایة) comes in two forms:

- **Walāyah** (فتح الواو) – refers to governance, authority,

guardianship

- **Wilāyah** (بِكُسْرِ الْوَاءِ) – refers to friendship, support, and help

The Qur'an uses both مَوْلَى and مَنَّى to refer to Allah as the close protector, supporter, and ally of the believers:

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

"Allah is the ally of those who believe." (Al-Baqarah 2:257)

فَنِعْمَ الْبَوْيَ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

"Excellent is the protector, and excellent is the helper." (Al-Anfāl 8:40)

Thus, when we speak of **Al-Walā'** in an Islamic context, we refer to **loyalty, love, nearness, and support** that is rooted deep inside the heart.

3.2 Al-Barā' (البراءة)

On the other hand, al-Barā' comes from the root بَرَأَ, meaning to be free, clear, or disassociated. It is used for both physical and ideological detachment.

Some examples of this word from the Qur'an include:

بَرَاءَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ

"(This is) a declaration of disassociation from Allah and His Messenger..." (At-Tawbah 9:1)

إِنِّي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ

"Indeed, I am free from what you worship." (Az-Zukhruf 43:26 -

statement of Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام)

إِنَّا بُرَءَاءُ مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ

“Indeed, we disassociate from you and from whatever you worship besides Allah.” (Al-Mumtahinah 60:4)

In essence, al-Barā’ is a declaration that we do not share the beliefs, actions, or moral path of those with whom we have the relationship of al-Barā’. It reflects both internal disavowal and external detachment from falsehood and its representatives – not out of personal enmity, but out of loyalty to divine truth. It is a stance of principled distancing that safeguards one’s īmān and identity.

4. Misconceptions



4.1 Misunderstandings from the Non-Muslim Perspective

4.1.1 What do they portray about Muslims?

A recurring misconception about Al-Walā' wal-Barā' in many non-Muslim academic and media circles is that it promotes blanket hatred toward all non-Muslims. This fear-based portrayal presents Islam as inherently hostile and its followers as doctrinally required to hate or harm others. Such portrayals are not only inaccurate but intellectually dishonest.

Some of the common claims made in this context include:

- That Muslims see all non-Muslims as evil or inherently corrupt.
- That the doctrine of Al-Walā' Wa-Bara mandates emotional or physical hostility toward non-Muslims.
- That the only relationship Islam allows with non-Muslims is one of hate, framed falsely as the “opposite” of Walā’ (loyalty).

Ironically, such writers often harbor and display the very kind of animosity and intense hatred that they accuse Muslims of — describing them as a “threat” and harbor Islamophobia.

Their claims are not only fallacious but also contradict the actual teachings and conduct of the Prophet ﷺ. His life offers ample

evidence of mercy, fairness, and a distinction between theological boundaries and personal conduct.

4.1.2 Refutation from the Sunnah:

The above-mentioned accusations, however, collapse when weighed against the actual conduct of the Prophet ﷺ – the very embodiment of Islamic teachings. To correct the narrative and provide context for what Al-Walā' wal-Barā' truly represents, it is essential to highlight examples from his life that demonstrate the difference between ideological disassociation and personal hostility.

The Incident of Tā'if:

When the Prophet ﷺ turned to the people of Tā'if, it was not for personal gain, but to seek their support and alliance (Walā') for the cause of Allah. He hoped they would show some willingness to hear the truth. But instead of any positive response, they mocked him, rejected him, and incited their riffraff to attack him. They not only denied Walā', but declared their Barā' from him in the ugliest way – through insult, ridicule, and violence. Yet, how did the Messenger ﷺ respond? He did not curse them. He did not seek revenge. Rather, he raised his hands and made du'ā' that their future generations be guided to Islām. This was the true prophetic way: holding firm to truth, disassociating from falsehood, but never crossing into personal hatred or injustice. The Prophet ﷺ showed us that al-Barā' is not about rage or cruelty – it is about standing with Allah, while still desiring good for the misguided.

Umrah al-Qadā' (عمرة القضاء) in the 7th year after Hijrah:

When the Prophet ﷺ returned to Makkah for Umrah the following year after the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah, Khālid ibn al-Walīd, still not

a Muslim at the time, chose to stay away in the mountains, avoiding the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims as he had inflicted harm and pain to them in Uhud. Upon his return home, he found a letter from his brother, al-Walīd ibn al-Walīd, encouraging him toward Islam.

In the letter, al-Walīd conveyed that the Prophet ﷺ had asked about him and expressed hope for his guidance. He saw potential in Khalod; A person of intelligence and ability like him could not remain unaware of the truth forever, and that if he accepted Islam, his talents would be of great benefit.

This moment highlights a profound lesson in al-Walā' wal-Barā': the Prophet ﷺ, while firmly disassociated from kufr and misguidance, still hoped for the guidance of even his adversaries. al-Barā' does not mean total disengagement. Rather, it involves ideological disavowal while maintaining concern, kindness, and openness for da'wah. The Prophet ﷺ modeled a balance – rejecting falsehood clearly while actively seeking the betterment and guidance of those who had yet to believe.

General Forgiveness After the Conquest of Makkah:

This was the moment when many expected revenge. Years of torture, boycott, exile, and battle – and now the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood victorious in the city that had once driven him out. But what did he say to those who had opposed him with every means?

"لَا تُثْرِيبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ، اذْهَبُوا فَأَنْتُمُ الظَّلَقَاءُ"

"There is no blame upon you today. Go, for you are free."

These are the words of the one sent as a mercy to the worlds, who disassociated from kufr completely, but yet extended forgiveness to even his enemies.

These examples illustrate the correct understanding of Al-Walā' wal-Barā': that we love, support, and align ourselves with Allah, His Messenger ﷺ, and His Dīn – and disassociate ourselves from disbelief, shirk, and misguidance. But this disassociation is never an excuse for injustice, cruelty, or arrogance. The Prophet ﷺ stood firm on tawhīd and never compromised with falsehood, yet he maintained justice, mercy, and a sincere desire for the guidance of others.

As his Ummah, this is the path we are required to follow. These examples are sufficient to refute the baseless accusation that Islam, and the doctrine of Al-Walā' wal-Barā', promotes blanket hatred of non-Muslims or a desire to constantly be at war with them. Such claims reflect either ignorance or deliberate distortion – and anyone who has sincerely studied the teachings of Islam and the life of the Prophet ﷺ will not be misled by them.

4.1.3 How to Respond to These Misconceptions and Prevent Their Harmful Impact

The false portrayals of Al-Walā' wal-Barā' by non-Muslim voices are not just abstract Islamophobic claims – they can have serious implications, especially for Muslims lacking depth in Islamic knowledge or living under the cultural pressures of non-Islamic societies. Our youth, particularly in the West, often face an identity crisis: expected to “fit in” while absorbing narratives that paint their Dīn as extreme or hostile. In such an environment, the distortion of Al-Walā' wal-Barā' can weaken īmān and blur the lines of allegiance and belief.

It is essential, therefore, that we take proactive and grounded steps to safeguard our understanding and protect our spiritual integrity.

At the Intellectual Level

Build An In-Depth Understanding of the Qur'an And Prophetic Sunnah: Move beyond superficial content and seek sound, structured knowledge. Understand how Al-Walā' wal-Barā' is framed by the Qur'an and Sunnah – not by media headlines or enemy narratives.

Develop critical awareness: Learn to identify and dismantle logical fallacies such as straw man arguments, false binaries, and emotional appeals disguised as reasoned critique. Equip yourself to defend Islam intelligently and confidently.

Engage, don't retreat: Begin by building a strong foundation in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and sound Islamic understanding. Develop the critical ability to analyze ideas clearly. Then, engage with what is written about Islam – not to absorb it, but to dismantle it with insight and reason. Identify where arguments are inconsistent, misleading, or outright false. Our response must be grounded in knowledge and clarity – not driven by emotion or reaction.

At the Practical Level

Don't rely on borrowed Understanding of Islam: Take ownership of your learning. True understanding comes from studying under qualified teachers, with context and continuity. Plan your journey! Thrust ahead!

Live your īmān, don't just claim it: Al-Walā' wal-Barā' is not just a slogan or identity badge – it must be visible in your lifestyle, your values, your priorities. A Muslim who lives in confusion or imitation cannot offer clarity to others.

Embody balance with firmness: As Muslims, we interact with all people with justice, honesty, and compassion – while holding firm to our beliefs. Like the Prophet ﷺ, we aim for guidance, not grudges. We disassociate from falsehood without abandoning dignity or mercy.

By strengthening both our intellectual understanding and lived conviction, we resist distortion – and present the beauty, strength, and balance of Islam as it truly is.

4.2 Misuse of the Concept in Sectarianism

4.2.1 What does this type of misconception entail:

One of the damaging distortions of al-Walā' wal-Barā' arises not from outside Islam, but from within – when it is misapplied in sectarian contexts. Some individuals and groups focus excessively on Barā' (disassociation) while neglecting Walā' (loyalty), leading to an imbalanced and divisive mindset. They are quick to disassociate from fellow Muslims over minor juristic or theological differences, showing a lack of patience, mercy, or sense of unity.

This attitude mirrors the mentality of the Khārijites, who misapplied Islamic principles to the extent that they made Barā' even with the companions of the Prophet ﷺ – the best of the generations of this Ummah. By declaring Barā' based on minor disagreements, they gave themselves license to harm, attack, and divide the Muslim community.

Such a misuse is not rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah, but in self-authorization, pride, and ignorance. Al-Walā' wal-Barā' was never meant to be a weapon against sincere Muslims.

4.2.1 How to Respond to These Misconceptions and Prevent Their Harmful Impact

The following are some of the ways through which we can protect ourselves of this form of misconception in sha Allah:

Prioritize fundamentals (uṣūl) over secondary matters (furū')

We must learn to distinguish between the essentials of the faith (uṣūl) and secondary issues (furū'). The essentials are core beliefs and principles upon which all mainstream schools of thought within Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah are united. In contrast, secondary issues are matters where legitimate scholarly differences exist – and such differences even occurred among the noble Companions themselves. Holding varying views on these matters does not make one a deviant or part of a "sect." However, making such differences a cause for division, disassociation, or hostility – that is what leads to sectarianism. Not every difference justifies separation or Barā'.

Stay with the Jamā'ah when in doubt:

When a matter is unclear or disputed, we should incline toward the understanding of the majority of trustworthy scholars and the mainstream body of the Ummah – the Jamā'ah. This serves as a safeguard against falling into misguidance or extremism. Throughout Islamic history, various groups – beginning with the Khawārij – have introduced distorted understandings of Islam and the concept of Al-Walā' wal-Barā'. These deviations were sometimes rooted in ignorance and, at other times, fueled by the schemes of adversaries seeking to divide the Muslim community. The mainstream scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah have consistently warned against such deviations. Therefore, we must cling to the guidance of qualified scholars and be cautious of those who oppose the consensus of the learned majority within the Ummah.

Promote unity over fragmentation:

Our commitment to al-Walā' must include loyalty to the Muslim Ummah – its people, scholars, and institutions – as long as they uphold the essentials of Islam.

4.3 Two Extremes in Political Engagement

When it comes to political matters, many fall into one of two extremes – both of which misunderstand the concept of Al-Walā' wal-Barā'.

4.3.1 The First Extreme: Complete Disengagement

Some Muslims detach themselves entirely from political matters, to the point that they remain silent in the face of injustice, oppression, and corruption – whether in Muslim-majority lands or as minorities in non-Muslim countries. This raises a serious question: Where is your Al-Walā' for your fellow Muslims? How can one claim to love and align with the Ummah while remaining indifferent to their suffering?

Islam is a comprehensive way of life – not limited to personal rituals, but encompassing justice, governance, and societal order. The Prophet ﷺ himself established the just and principled society of Madinah, laying the foundation for a model Islamic state. Following his Sunnah, Muslims must also work – through legitimate, wise, and constructive means – to challenge injustice and promote justice in their societies.

4.3.2 The Second Extreme: Declaring Rulers Disbelievers and Advocating Rebellion

On the opposite side, some fall into the trap of takfir – hastily declaring Muslim rulers to be disbelievers for their sins or shortcomings, and even promoting violent rebellion against them.

This is another deviation that leads to greater harm and division within the Ummah.

When a Muslim ruler fails to implement Islamic laws, two scenarios must be distinguished:

- 1. They believe other systems are better than Islam:** In such a case, this belief may constitute disbelief, as it contradicts one of the foundational aspects of *īmān*. But even then, such a judgment is not to be passed hastily by unqualified individuals; it requires scholarly investigation and judicial process.
- 2. They fail due to weakness, fear, or personal gain:** In this case, despite their sinfulness or oppression, they remain within the fold of Islam. The proper course is to advise, reform, and engage in lawful, constructive efforts to correct the situation – not to cause chaos or bloodshed.

4.3.3 Balance Is the Way

Al-Walā' wal-Barā' requires that we stand with our Ummah and uphold justice – neither withdrawing into apathy nor falling into reckless rebellion. The path of the Prophet ﷺ and the rightly guided scholars is the middle path: calling to truth with wisdom, resisting oppression with principle, and seeking reform through knowledge, unity, and perseverance.

4.4 Mistaken Loyalties in the Name of Nationalism

Another dangerous misconception that distorts the correct understanding of Al-Walā' wal-Barā' is the idol of nationalism – a modern construct that has tricked many Muslims into shifting their primary allegiance from the Ummah to their local nation-state.

This false ideology causes Muslims to think only within the borders of their "own" little patch of land called 'country', becoming indifferent to the suffering of their brothers and sisters in other lands. They forget that the believers are one body – and when any part of it is in pain, the rest must feel it.

But modern nationalism has fragmented this body – tearing it into pieces, isolating Muslims behind borders, and detaching hearts from their obligations to the wider Ummah. Some even go so far as to support or justify the oppression of Muslims in other regions if it suits their "national interest" – whether in Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Pakistan, East Turkestan, or elsewhere.

A Muslim can never support disbelievers against fellow Muslims. This is a red line. To do so is to violate the essence of *Al-Walā' wal-Barā'* – siding with falsehood against truth, and with oppression against justice.

We must rise above the narrow identity of tribalism, ethnicity, or nationalism, and return to our God-given identity as a single Ummah – bound together by faith, not by flags or borders. Our loyalty belongs first and foremost to Allah, His Messenger ﷺ, and the believers.

4.5 The Trap of Imitation: Losing Identity to Fit In

One of the modern challenges that weakens the essence of *Al-Walā' wal-Barā'* is the uncritical imitation of disbelieving nations and cultures – in behavior, values, celebrations, clothing, and even worldviews. Many Muslims, especially in the West, find themselves under constant pressure to "fit in." But in this effort, they begin to lose their distinct identity – sometimes even feeling ashamed of being visibly Muslim.

This erosion of confidence in one's own Dīn leads to a dangerous internal defeat: where we no longer see the beauty of Islam, and instead begin to look up to others – even in matters that directly oppose our faith.

The Prophet ﷺ warned us clearly:

مِنْ تَشْبِهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ

"Whoever imitates a people is from among them." (Abu Dawūd, 4031 – Hasan)

Imitating others is not just a surface issue. It reflects an internal alignment – a shift in loyalty and admiration. When Muslims adopt the un-Islamic customs of others – such as celebrating non-Muslim religious festivals, copying their immodest fashion, or absorbing secular worldviews – they unknowingly dilute the very concept of al-Barā'.

Islam does not require us to isolate ourselves. It requires us to integrate, not imitate. True multi-culturalism does not mean abandoning your religion or copying others – it means confidently contributing to society while maintaining your Islamic identity.

A Muslim should walk with dignity, knowing that Islam is complete, noble, and divinely revealed. We have no need to copy those who do not have guidance. As Allah ﷺ says:

وَلَا تَرْكُنُوا إِلَيِ الظَّالِمِينَ ۖ فَلَكُمُ الْنَّارُ ۖ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلَيَاءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنْصَرُونَ

And do not be inclined to the wrongdoers or you will be touched by the Fire. For then you would have no protectors other than Allah, nor would you be helped. (Hūd 11:113)

Let us hold firmly to the Qur'an and Sunnah, take pride in our heritage, and nurture our distinct Islamic personality – not one borrowed from others, but one rooted in the light of revelation.

5. Prohibited Forms of Loyalty and Association in Al-Walā' wal-Barā'



Having clarified the misconceptions surrounding Al-Walā' wal-Barā', we now move to examine its correct boundaries in light of the Qur'an and Sunnah. This chapter focuses on what is not allowed – the forms of loyalty, love, and association that violate the very spirit of this doctrine.

Al-Walā' wal-Barā' is not about hostility for its own sake, but about protecting the heart and identity of the believer from ideological compromise, moral dilution, and misplaced alliances. There are clear red lines which, if crossed, can result in serious harm to one's faith or even expulsion from the fold of Islam.

Through the guidance of Revelation, Allah ﷺ has warned us against specific kinds of attachments and support – particularly those that empower falsehood, harm the Ummah, or betray the cause of Islam. In the following sections, we will walk through these prohibitions with supporting evidence and explanation.

This will not only protect us from falling into error, but also help us distinguish between necessary firmness and forbidden extremism.

5.1 Association with Shirk and Disbelief

One of the most fundamental prohibitions in Al-Walā' wal-Barā' is forming bonds of loyalty, affection, or religious unity with shirk (polytheism) and its people. This is a red line in Islam that is clearly

laid out in both the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Allah ﷺ presents the example of Prophet Ibrāhīm ('alayhis-salām), who firmly disassociated himself from the shirk of his people:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمَهُ أَنِّي بَرَآءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ

"And [mention] when Ibrāhīm said to his father and his people: Indeed, I am disassociated from what you worship." (Az-Zukhruf 43:26)

This declaration of Barā' – dissociation from false gods and shirk – is a clear rejection of falsehood in creed and worship.

In modern times, however, the fitnah of mixing religions (Ikhtilāt al-Adyān) has become widespread. In places like India, we see increasing calls to merge all religions into one "universal path," claiming that the various names and forms of worship across faiths ultimately refer to the same deity. This idea is often masked in the language of interfaith harmony, but it directly contradicts the Islamic principle of tawhīd and al-Barā' min al-shirk.

Historically, such thinking was seen in the Deen-e-Ilāhī movement initiated by Emperor Akbar – a man who attempted to merge Islam, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity into a single man-made religion. It was a man-centered theology that dismantled divine revelation in favor of political unity, and it was unanimously rejected by the scholars of Islam at the time.

Muslims must remain vigilant against such ideas, no matter how attractively packaged. We are commanded to uphold the uniqueness of Islam and to maintain Barā' from any belief system that conflicts with the truth revealed by Allah ﷺ.

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ

“For you is your religion, and for me is my religion.” (Al-Kāfirūn 109:6)

To embrace or even promote theological unity with shirk is to violate the essence of al-Barā’. Our duty is to treat others with kindness and fairness – yes – but never at the cost of compromising the uniqueness and truth of Islam.

5.2 Loving and Allying with Non-Muslims Over Muslims – Even if They Are Family

Islam acknowledges the natural bonds of love and affection between family members. However, when those closest to us actively choose disbelief over faith and oppose the truth, we are commanded to prioritize our loyalty to Allah, His Messenger ﷺ, and the believers above all else – including blood ties.

Allah ﷺ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَخِذُوا آبَاءَكُمْ وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ أَوْ لِيَاءً إِنَّ اسْتَحْبُوا
الْكُفَّارَ عَلَى الْأَيَّلَانِ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِنْكُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

“O you who believe, do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies if they prefer disbelief over faith. And whoever among you allies with them – then it is those who are the wrongdoers.” (Surah At-Tawbah 9:23)

This ayah does not command us to sever all family ties or abandon kindness and good conduct. Instead, it draws a firm line: our allegiance must lie with īmān, not blood – with those who are loyal to Allah and His Dīn , not with those who fight against it or aid those who do.

Loving and allying with non-Muslims in a way that compromises one's commitment to Islam or weaken the forces of Islam or one's resolve to serve it – especially when done at the expense of loyalty to the Muslim Ummah – is a betrayal of Al-Walā'. When a Muslim chooses such a relationship over their loyalty to the truth, they fall into the category of those whom Allah has labelled as ẓālimūn (wrongdoers).

This command is especially relevant in times when Muslims may feel torn between personal loyalties and their religious obligations. The test of Al-Walā' wal-Barā' is most real when it comes with emotional weight – when our own parents or siblings choose disbelief over faith. At such times, our love for Allah and our commitment to His path must remain supreme.

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَآدُونَ مَنْ حَادَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَلَوْ كَانُوا أَعْبَادَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَنَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ
فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ الْأَلِيمَةَ وَأَيَّدَهُمْ بِرُوْحٍ مِنْهُ وَيُنْذِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَرُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ
اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۖ ۲۲

You will never find any people who [truly] believe in Allah and the last Day and [at the same time] love anyone who contends against God and His Apostle - even though they be their fathers, their sons, their brothers or their relatives. It is they in whose hearts Allah has inscribed faith and has strengthened them with a spirit of His own. He will admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow, to live therein forever. Allah will be

well pleased with them, and they will be well pleased with Him. They are the party of Allah. Beware! Surely it is the party of Allah that will be successful. (Al-Mujādilah 58:22)

We must interact with our non-Muslim relatives with good character, gentleness, and kindness — as long as they are not hostile toward the Dīn — but our hearts must remain firmly tied to īmān, and our loyalties aligned with those who believe.

5.3 Imitation of non-Muslims:

We previously discussed in Section 5.5 how Muslims today are often pressured to “fit in” by adopting foreign customs, appearances, or ideologies that conflict with Islam. In this section, we further emphasize that such imitation is not just a cultural concern, but a Sharī’ī prohibition when it involves aligning with practices rooted in disbelief or opposing Islamic values.

The Prophet ﷺ clearly stated:

مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ

“Whoever imitates a people is from among them.” (Abū Dāwūd, 4031 – hasan)

This warning marks a clear boundary: Muslims are not allowed to imitate non-Muslims in their religious symbols, rituals, or identity-defining customs — especially when it implies admiration, allegiance, or moral submission.

Examples of prohibited imitation include:

- Celebrating religious holidays like Christmas, Holi, or Diwali.
- Adopting religious identifiers, such as wearing a cross, bindi,

clerical robes, or distinct dress styles associated with religious groups that contradict Islamic teachings.

- Emulating secular ideologies or lifestyles that oppose Islamic values – such as embracing materialism, immodesty, or anti-religious worldviews.

This form of imitation reflects more than external similarity – it often signals an internal leaning of the heart, a confusion in *Walā'*, and a subtle erosion of one's identity as a Muslim.

As Allāmah Iqbal reminded us:

اپنی ملت پر قیاس اقوامِ مغرب سے نہ کر
خاص ہے ترکیب میں قومِ رسولِ ہاشمی

"Do not compare your Ummah with the Western nations; The nation of the Hashimi Messenger ﷺ is unique in its composition."

We were never meant to dissolve our identity in that of others. Our dignity lies in carrying the honor of Islam openly and confidently. Any imitation that reflects love for falsehood or shame in truth contradicts the spirit of *al-Barā'*, and therefore stands clearly prohibited under *Al-Walā' wal-Barā'*.

5.4 Befriending Those Who Mock the Religion

One of the clearest red lines in the Qur'an is the prohibition of allying or befriending those who mock the *Dīn* of Allah ﷺ. The Qur'ān says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُوًّا وَلَعِبًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكُفَّارُ أَوْلِيَاءٌ وَأَتَقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ

"O you who believe! Do not take those who take your religion in mockery and fun – whether from among those who were given the Scripture before you or from the disbelievers – as allies. And fear Allah if you are (truly) believers." (Surah al-Mā'idah, 5:57)

This ayah directly addresses the believers' honor and sense of identity. Islam teaches us that our Dīn is not something to be mocked, debated as entertainment, or ridiculed in the name of satire or "freedom of speech." Those who disrespect the religion – whether in words, actions, or attitudes – have declared their stance clearly, and the believer must also take a clear stance in response.

Among many other important lessons, we can learn the following from the ayat above:

- **Pride in Faith:** A Muslim must carry their Islam with dignity and never tolerate humiliation of their Dīn, Prophet ﷺ, or sacred symbols. Al-Walā' requires love and honor for everything tied to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, while al-Barā' requires distancing from those who mock them.
- **Freedom of Speech ≠ Freedom to Mock:** While some societies allow insults in the name of "free speech," Islam distinguishes between sincere dialogue and deliberate disrespect. The believer's heart should feel hurt when the Dīn is mocked – and this natural *ghayrah* (*urge to safeguard the honor*) is part of īmān.

The Qur'an forbids establishing bonds of loyalty or trust with such people. We may interact or engage where needed, but taking them as close friends, supporters, or confidants is a betrayal of faith. The

Prophet ﷺ himself showed strong aversion toward mockery and always stood in defense of the sanctity of revelation.

5.5 Allying with Those at War with You or Who Support Your Enemies

5.5.1 General guidance

One of the strongest warnings in the Qur'an regarding prohibited loyalties is directed at those who align themselves – emotionally, politically, militarily, or strategically – with the enemies of Allah and the enemies of the believers, especially during times of open hostility or war. This includes not only those who directly fight against Muslims but also those who aid or support such aggression.

Allah ﷺ says:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوّي وَعَدُوّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِمْ

بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَقُدْ كَفَرُوا بِمَا جَاءَكُمْ مِّنَ الْحَقِّ ...

"O you who believe! Do not take My enemies and your enemies as allies, offering them affection, while they have disbelieved in what has come to you of the truth..." (Al-Mumtahanah 60:1)

This ayah was revealed in the context of Muslims extending affection or confidential communication to those who had driven out the Prophet ﷺ and were engaged in hostilities against Islam. It makes clear that such behavior is a serious betrayal.

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْهُ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوْ آءَ الْسَّبِيلِ

"And whoever among you does so has certainly strayed from the right path."

Further elaboration of their behavior is given in the ayaat that follow:

إِن يَنْقُفُوكُمْ يَكُونُوا لَكُمْ أَعْدَاءٌ وَيُبْسِطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَلْسُنَتَهُمْ
بِالسُّوءِ . . .

"If they gain dominance over you, they will be your enemies, and will extend against you their hands and their tongues with evil..." (Al-Mumtahanah 60:2)

Hence, the Qur'an not only forbids alliance with active enemies, but also describes their motives and consequences. This includes those who:

- Fight against Muslims,
- Expel them from their homes or lands,
- Assist others in doing so.

In such cases, any form of wala' – be it through affection, support, or political alignment – is a serious violation of faith.

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَرِكُمْ وَظَاهِرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلُّهُمْ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

"Indeed, Allah only forbids you from allying with those who fight you

because of your religion, expel you from your homes, and aid in your expulsion – and whoever allies with them, then it is they who are the wrongdoers." (Al-Mumtahanah 60:9)

This principle is further emphasized by the example of Ibrāhīm عليه السلام and his followers, who made a clear statement of disassociation from their people's shirk, even while showing individual kindness such as Ibrāhīm's promise to pray for his father:

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ...

"Indeed, there is for you a good example in Ibrāhīm and those with him..." (Al-Mumtahanah 60:4)

Thus, the believer must uphold loyalty to Allah and His Dīn even during testing times. The command is not to harbor hatred for all disbelievers, but to never side with those actively hostile to Islam and Muslims

This is a matter of both political clarity and spiritual allegiance, and it defines one of the major boundaries of Al-Walā' wal-Barā'.

5.5.2 A practical case – Muslims in Non-Muslim Countries: When the Host Nation Supports War Against Muslims

The situation of Muslims living as minorities varies greatly based on the stance of their host country toward the global Muslim Ummah.

Hostile Countries (Directly at War with Muslims)

Muslims residing in countries that are directly engaged in military aggression against Muslim lands must carefully assess their situation.

Primary Option - Hijrah (Migration): If possible, one should strive to migrate away from such hostile lands. Leaving a place where one is expected to remain silent or complicit in the face of injustice aligns with the principle of al-Barā'.

If Hijrah Is Not Feasible: For some, especially those who have fled more dangerous lands or have no place to go, migration may not be possible. In such cases:

- They must **maintain internal disassociation** from the oppression and openly support justice within their means.
- **Avoid any support** – political, military, social, or ideological – toward aggressors.
- Use **lawful avenues** (media, legal activism, public discourse) to voice opposition and defend the oppressed.
- Campaign to **challenge unjust laws and policies**. Successes have been seen when Muslims and allies stand firmly against discrimination.

Countries That Support Hostility Indirectly

Some countries may not be at war themselves, but actively support wars against Muslims through funding, logistics, or political cover. The same principles apply here:

- Migration is preferred if viable.
- Otherwise, remain firm in your moral and ideological stance.
- Never lend support – direct or indirect – to aggression.

Neutral or Just Countries

There are also nations that remain neutral or speak up for justice and truth. A recent example at the time of writing is South Africa,

which has legally challenged injustice against Palestinians.

In such environments, while al-Barā' still applies in terms of disassociating from kufr and un-Islamic values, Muslims may:

- Engage positively where shared human values align with Islamic ethics.
- Cooperate in matters of justice and mutual respect, while holding firm to Islamic identity.

5.6 Do Not Share Your Inner Secrets with Them

Allah ﷺ commands in the Qur'an:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَخِذُوا بِطَانَةً مِّنْ دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا
وَدُّوِلًا مَا عِنْتُمْ قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفُوْهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ
قَدْ بَيَّنَاهُ لَكُمْ أَلْعَانِتِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

O you who believe! Take not for intimates others than your own folk, who would spare no pains to ruin you; they love to hamper you. Hatred is revealed by (the utterance of) their mouths, but that which their breasts hide is greater. We have made plain for you the revelations if you will understand. (Āl 'Imrān 3:118)

The word *biṭānah* in this ayah literally refers to the inner lining of a garment – the part closest to the body. In this context, it refers to people being given access to sensitive matters and internal affairs – particularly those outside the fold of Islam.

This ayah is a clear prohibition against entrusting those who are hostile to Islam – whether militarily, politically, or ideologically – with access to internal secrets. It addresses not only individuals

but also nations and governments that expose their strategic or security matters to enemy states.

This includes:

- Intelligence-sharing with those who oppress Muslims.
- Strategic cooperation with aggressors while our own brothers and sisters are being killed.
- Selling out the Ummah's trust to those who have proven hatred against the Dīn of Allah.

In today's world, we see examples of this when some Muslim-majority governments ally with and provide support to powers that oppress Muslims, such as those actively involved in the slaughter of Palestinians and other oppressed Muslim communities. Such behavior is a direct violation of this command.

This is not about closing doors to diplomacy or lawful cooperation – rather, it is about safeguarding the honor, safety, and secrets of the Ummah from those who wish to harm it.

True loyalty (Al-Walā') demands that we do not hand over our internal affairs to those whose enmity to Islam is open and ongoing.

5.7 Not Supporting the Disbelievers Against the Believers

Allah ﷺ commands:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ
أَعْرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَجْعَلُوا إِلَهًا عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا

“O you who believe! Do not take the disbelievers as allies instead of the believers. Do you wish to give Allah a clear case against you?”
(An-Nisā’ 4:144)

This ayah strictly forbids taking disbelievers as awliyā’ (allies, protectors, or intimate supporters) in preference to believers — especially in matters of loyalty, allegiance, or siding during conflict.

This includes:

- Supporting them politically or militarily against fellow Muslims.
- Favoring their ideologies and leadership while showing disdain for believers and Islamic principles.
- Placing muḥabbah qalbī (deep-hearted affection and alignment) with those who reject Allah — more than or in place of the mu’minīn.

Such misplaced alliance is not a matter of diplomacy or cooperation; rather, it is about emotional allegiance, trust, and siding in opposition to the Muslim Ummah. Allah warns that this can bring about a clear hujjah (proof) against a person — something extremely dangerous in the Hereafter.

It is essential that the emotional core of a believer remains attached to Allah, His Messenger ﷺ, and the believers. One cannot claim true īmān while actively supporting those who oppose Islam — especially at the cost of harming fellow Muslims.

True al-Walā’ is not just about public stance — it starts in the heart. Whom you admire, support, and wish victory for reflects your true loyalties.

6. Permitted and Recommended Forms of Loyalty and Association in Al-Walā' wal-Barā'



Having discussed in the previous chapter the impermissible forms of allegiance and association as defined by the Qur'an and Sunnah, we now turn to the positive and constructive side of Al-Walā' wal-Barā'. This chapter outlines the associations and loyalties that are either permitted or encouraged in Islam. It is important to understand that while al-Barā' entails disassociation from disbelief and its manifestations, Islam does not promote isolationism, injustice, or cruelty. There is balance and wisdom in this concept – and it is rooted in love for the believers, justice towards others, and a firm commitment to truth.

This chapter will guide the reader through eight categories of association that fall within the bounds of the Sharī'ah – from supporting fellow Muslims and maintaining just dealings with non-Muslims, to the permissibility of certain forms of interaction, marriage, and da'wah. The first three sections focus on interactions with Muslims, while the remaining five address dealings with non-Muslims – all in accordance with the framework of Al-Walā' wal-Barā'. By clarifying what is permitted and even encouraged, this chapter seeks to offer a balanced and comprehensive understanding of this essential principle.

6.1 Supporting the Believers

One of the clearest and most urgent demands of Al-Walā' is standing with your fellow believers – in heart, in word, and in

deed. This is not just a feeling, nor a theological abstraction. It is a covenant of loyalty – a binding obligation upon every Muslim to be a true ally (wali) to those who say *lā ilāha illa Allāh*. To support them. To defend them. To never leave them alone.

Allah SWT says:

إِنَّا وَلِيُّكُمُ الَّلَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَوَةَ وَهُمْ رَكِعُونَ

Your only guardians are Allah, His Messenger, and fellow believers – who establish prayer and pay alms-tax with humility. (Al-Maidah 5:55).

مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحْمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ
تَرَاهُمْ رُكَعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَنًا ۚ سَيِّدَاهُمْ فِي
وُجُوهِهِم مِّنْ أَثْرِ الْسُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ
كَذِنْبٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْعَهُ فَأَزَرَهُ فَأَسْتَغْلَظَ فَأُسْتَوَى عَلَى سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الْزُّرَاعَ
لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّلِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ
مَخْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah. And those with him are firm with the disbelievers and compassionate with one another. You see them bowing and prostrating 'in prayer', seeking Allah's bounty and pleasure. The sign 'of brightness can be seen' on their faces from the trace of prostrating 'in prayer'. This is their description in the Torah. And their

parable in the Gospel is that of a seed that sprouts its 'tiny' branches, making it strong. Then it becomes thick, standing firmly on its stem, to the delight of the planters – in this way Allah makes the believers a source of dismay for the disbelievers. To those of them who believe and do good, Allah has promised forgiveness and a great reward. (Al-Fath 48:29)

Let us know see how we can practice this Wala at different levels in our societal life.

6.1.1 At the Individual Level

At the personal level, Al-Walā' means being emotionally present for the lonely, financially helpful to the struggling, spiritually supportive to the distant. It means sharing burdens, rushing to aid, and responding with care before even being asked. The believer should be the shoulder others lean on, the hand that lifts, the heart that feels.

If a Muslim feels abandoned or invisible in their pain, then something is deeply wrong with our practice of this principle.

The Prophet ﷺ set a clear standard for our dealings with each other:

الْمُؤْمِنَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ كَالْبُنْيَانِ يُشَدُّ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا

"The believer to the believer is like a building – each part strengthens the other." (Ṣaḥīḥ at-Tirmidhi, 1928)

This isn't just a metaphor – it's a Shar'ī standard. Every believer must feel that if even a single brother or sister from the Ummah suffer, the whole Ummah suffers. This is Wilāyah.

6.1.2 At the Organizational Level

Beyond the personal, Al-Walā' extends to every effort and institution working to uphold the Dīn. Whether it is a masjid, a

da‘wah group, a student circle, or a relief organization — these are not to be treated as side-projects of the Ummah. They are its living pulse.

They should never have to struggle to find support. Why should any noble Islamic initiative be left uncertain about volunteers, resources, or community backing? Al-Walā’ means you rise up — you become their walī. Don’t wait to be asked. Don’t spectate. Own the mission.

If a group is defending Islam, spreading knowledge, aiding the weak — you are part of them. You are with them. Or else, you have failed them.

This also includes supporting the ‘ulamā’ and righteous scholars — those who carry the legacy of Prophethood. Abandoning them, distancing oneself from their circles, or withholding support is not neutrality — it is betrayal. To be with them is to guard the guidance of the Ummah itself.

6.1.3 At the Community Level

At the societal level, Al-Walā’ requires us to build a collective consciousness. One where the spiritual, economic, emotional, and social wellbeing of every believer matters. A hurting Muslim, anywhere in our locality, is our responsibility. Community care is not a luxury — it is a Shar‘ī mandate.

It means fostering environments where no Muslim walks alone — not in grief, not in poverty, not in confusion. It is our duty to build mosques, spaces, and support networks that reflect this sacred bond.

6.1.4 At the State Level

At the level of leadership, policy, and international relations, Al-Walā' takes on its most consequential and far-reaching form. Muslim governments, institutions, and influential bodies are not absolved from the duty of loyalty to the Ummah. Rather, their responsibility is weightier — for their silence or action affects the lives of millions.

When Muslim communities are being oppressed — in Palestine, East Turkistan, Kashmir, Sudan, Myanmar, or elsewhere — political neutrality or alliance with oppressors is a betrayal of Wilāyah. Al-Walā' requires that Muslim leadership actively side with the oppressed believers. This includes:

- Exercising diplomatic pressure against aggressor nations,
- Extending financial aid and humanitarian relief,
- Offering asylum or support to those fleeing persecution,
- Building media narratives that expose injustice and support the truth.
- Providing military support where needed

But this loyalty must go beyond mere words. It must transcend the artificial borders that have sliced the Ummah into disunited fragments. Nationalism, a tool of colonial manipulation, has no place in the brotherhood of Islam. The believers — across lands, tongues, and ethnicities — are one body. Therefore, Muslim countries must break the shackles of nationalist selfishness, and pool their political, economic, and military resources to safeguard the dignity of Islam and its people. Muslim countries must stand hand-in-hand, shoulder-to-shoulder and strengthen each other.

The Qur'ān reminds us:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ

"Indeed, the believers are but brothers..." (Surah Al-Hujurāt, 49:10)

Let that ayah not remain a slogan. Let it become a policy. Let the wealth of one Muslim country flow to the aid of another. Let the diplomatic clout of one state be used to defend the rights of Muslims beyond its borders. Let the Muslim world become a single hand, supporting one another in truth, justice, and honour.

This is the vision of Al-Walā' at the state level: not isolation, not cowardice, not betrayal — but active brotherhood, unified strength, and a collective stand for the sake of Allah and His Deen. The future of the Ummah depends on leadership that embodies this sacred bond.

6.2 Supporting and Advising a Fāsiq Muslim: Balancing Loyalty with Responsibility

Al-Walā' wal-Barā' does not demand perfection from every Muslim to qualify for loyalty. Rather, it calls for a balanced approach rooted in sincerity, justice, and wisdom. A Muslim who falls into fisq (open sin or disobedience) does not cease to be a part of the Ummah — and therefore still holds a right to our concern, advice, and measured support.

Loyalty to a fāsiq Muslim means calling them to righteousness — not ignoring or enabling their wrongdoing, but inviting them with gentleness, wisdom, and sincerity. It means desiring their guidance, not celebrating their deviation.

The Prophet ﷺ warned clearly:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَغْضِبُ إِذَا مُدِحَ الْفَاسِقُ فِي الْأَرْضِ

"Indeed, Allah is angry when a fāsiq is praised on the earth." (Musnad Ahmad, 13096; Ṣaḥīḥ)

Praising the fāsiq or normalizing their disobedience is a betrayal of the values of Islam. Fisq is to be denounced – not the person, but the sin – and efforts must be made to guide them back, through sincere nasiḥah and a heart that longs for their return to the path of Allah.

That said, the presence of fisq does not justify abandonment – especially when the fāsiq is wronged or oppressed. If a sinner is unjustly attacked or maligned, our loyalty requires that we stand by them in their oppression, even as we oppose their sins. This is the justice of Islam: you aid your brother when he is oppressed and when he oppresses – by stopping his wrongdoing and defending him from harm.

The same principle applies to nations and rulers as well. A country or a leader may be engaged in sinful policies or actions – but if they face unjust aggression or harm from external forces, Muslims are not permitted to side with the aggressors. The Ummah must defend its own – while continuing to advise and reform from within.

This is the beautiful balance of Al-Walā': firm upon the truth, yet fair to the sinner; uncompromising with values, yet compassionate toward those who fall short. The goal is not just to divide, but to uplift and reclaim hearts for the Dīn of Allah.

6.3 Demonstrating Al-Walā' as a Muslim Minority: The Role of the Diaspora

Living in non-Muslim lands does not excuse a Muslim from their duty of Al-Walā'. In fact, it becomes even more crucial for diaspora Muslims to uphold and demonstrate their loyalty to the Ummah – in identity, actions, and priorities – despite being surrounded by differing cultures, systems, and ideologies.

The true spirit of Al-Walā' in such settings is not isolation or withdrawal, but living as a conscious and loyal Muslim whose heart, voice, and contribution are with the Ummah. Though separated by geography, the believer is never detached in concern, compassion, and commitment.

There are several ways Muslims in the diaspora can actively fulfill this duty:

- **Maintaining Islamic identity:** Amidst pressure to conform, Muslims must not dissolve their identity into dominant ideologies. Holding firm to Islamic values, lifestyle, languages, and dress is a visible sign of wala' – not just to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, but also to fellow Muslims and the society at large.
- **Advocating for the Ummah:** Muslims abroad must use their right to freedom of speech as a responsibility – by raising awareness, countering misinformation, and defending the honor and rights of Muslims suffering oppression across the world. Speaking up is part of being a wali to those whose voices have been suppressed under the media and state censorship and tyranny.
- **Pooling resources:** Economic and educational privilege must be translated into support. Diaspora Muslims can fund humanitarian efforts, sponsor scholars, support Islamic

education, and help establish projects that benefit the Ummah locally and globally. Al-Walā' demands that we do not enjoy comfort while forgetting those in hardship.

- **Raising children with loyalty to the Ummah:** The new generation must not be raised with a sense of detachment from the global Muslim family. They should be taught from an early age that their bond is first with Islam, with the Messenger ﷺ, and with the believers across the world – regardless of race, language, or national boundaries.

However, this cannot be achieved through words alone. If the parents themselves live a lifestyle that is indifferent to the Dīn – making no effort to engage with learning about the Dīn, community work, or concern for the Ummah – their children will naturally grow up distant from Islam as well. The harms of such obliviousness are especially severe in the West, where secularism, individualism, and identity dilution are deeply ingrained in the surrounding culture. Unlike in Muslim-majority countries, where Islamic norms may still be publicly reinforced, Muslim children in the West are under constant psychological and social pressure to conform. In such an environment, if the home does not model a lifestyle of Al-Walā' – of care for the Dīn, love for the believers, and resistance to falsehood – the child's identity is at great risk.

Thus, the duty of nurturing loyalty to Islam and the Ummah begins with the family's own lived commitment. What the child sees practiced with consistency – concern for Muslim causes, pride in Islamic teachings, connection to righteous scholars and efforts – will take root far deeper than any verbal instruction. Al-Walā', in this regard, is both inherited

and cultivated through daily example.

In essence, living in the West or any non-Muslim land must not weaken our commitment to the Ummah. Rather, it should awaken within us a stronger sense of duty. Our voices echo louder from afar, our actions inspire more eyes, and our means – when used rightly – can strengthen the struggling parts of this blessed Ummah. This is the demand of true Al-Walā'.

6.4 Showing Goodness and Upholding Justice with Non-Hostile Non-Muslims

From this point onward, we turn to the subject of interacting with ghayr-harbi non-Muslims – those who are not at war with Islam or the Muslim community.

The Qur'an clearly allows and even encourages just and kind treatment towards such individuals:

لَا يَنْهَا كُمُّ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبْرُوْهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

"Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes – from being righteous (birr) toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly." (Surah Al-Mumtahanah, 60:8)

This ayah outlines a critical balance within the principle of Al-Walā' wal-Barā'. While believers are commanded to disassociate from kufr and those who oppose the faith, they are simultaneously commanded to be fair, just, and even benevolent to those non-Muslims who live peacefully and do not engage in hostility.

The term “*tabarrūhūm*” used in the ayah comes from the root of *birr*, which implies deep kindness, generosity, and ethical conduct. This shows that Muslims are not only permitted but encouraged to extend goodness to non-hostile non-Muslims – in personal dealings, neighbourly relations, humanitarian aid, and general courtesy.

Such upright behavior is not a contradiction of al-Barā’, but rather a fulfillment of Islam’s universal justice. This approach opens hearts to the beauty of the Dīn and reflects the character of the Prophet ﷺ, who always upheld fairness and kindness in his dealings – even with those outside the fold of Islam, so long as they were not aggressors.

Let this ayah serve as a reminder: Dawah is not only in words, but also in our conduct. Justice and goodness shown to peaceful non-Muslims is not just allowed – it is beloved to Allah.

6.5 Engaging in Permissible Dealings (Mu‘āmalāt) with the Non-Muslims

Islam permits fair and just dealings with non-Muslims in daily life, so long as these interactions do not compromise one’s faith, values, or loyalty to the Ummah. al-Barā’ does not mean avoiding all interaction or refraining from trade with them.

In fact, the Sunnah offers clear examples of such dealings – including financial transactions, collateral agreements (*rahn*), and commercial exchanges conducted by the Prophet ﷺ with non-Muslims in Madinah – demonstrating that such interactions are permissible when rooted in justice and integrity and while they don’t support those who fight against Islam.

That said, Al-Walā’ also has an economic dimension. While

trading with non-Muslims is permissible, a believer's first priority should be to support Muslim-owned businesses whenever possible. This economic solidarity is part of the lived expression of loyalty to the Ummah. Supporting Muslims in trade strengthens their stability and allows Islamic values to flourish in society.

Equally important is the obligation to boycott businesses and corporations that actively support the oppression of Muslims or are complicit in crimes against our Ummah – as seen in Gaza and elsewhere. al-Barā' or disassociation at economic level is a powerful tool, and Islam does not condone aiding the oppressors financially. Choosing where we spend our money is a direct manifestation of our loyalties.

Thus, even in permissible dealings, the believer walks with discernment – engaging justly, but never forgetful of his allegiance to Allah, His Messenger ﷺ, and the believers.

6.6 Marrying Non-Muslim Women (Ahl al-Kitab)

Islam permits Muslim men to marry chaste women from the People of the Book, namely Jews and Christians. Allah SWT says:

الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ الْطَّيِّبَاتُ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَّكُمْ
وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَالْمُحْسَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُحْسَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ
مُسَفِّحِينَ وَلَا مُتَخَذِّلِي أَخْدَانِ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبَطَ عَمَلُهُ
وَهُوَ فِي الْعَاجِزَةِ مِنَ الْخَسِيرِينَ

Today all good, pure foods have been made lawful for you. Similarly, the food of the People of the Book is permissible for you and yours is permissible for them. And 'permissible for you in marriage' are chaste believing women as well as chaste women of those given the Scripture before you - as long as you pay them their dowries in wedlock, neither fornicating nor taking them as mistresses. And whoever rejects the faith, all their good deeds will be void 'in this life' and in the Hereafter they will be among the losers. (Al-Maidah 5:5)

This permission inherently entails living with them, eating with them, and being intimate with them – all within the framework of a lawful marriage. This indicates that al-Barā' from the Ahl al-Kitab is not an absolute or total social disassociation. There is space within the Shari'ah for regulated interaction, even on the most personal level, without negating the broader principle of disavowal of their beliefs.

However, this permissibility is not unconditional. When the risk of harm to one's religion outweighs the benefit, the permission is suspended. This was the case during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu), who forbade Muslim men from marrying women of the People of the Book, fearing that such marriages could negatively influence the men or their children. His position was not based on a change in the law, but on applying a restriction due to changing circumstances and the need to safeguard religious integrity.

This restriction rests on two core aspects of al-Walā' wal-Barā'. The first is al-Walā' – loyalty and preference for Muslim women, who are more deserving of marriage due to their shared faith, values, and support for Islamic identity. Giving them precedence reinforces the bonds of the Muslim community. The second is al-

Barā' – disavowal of the shirk and theological errors present in the beliefs of Jews and Christians. While the law allows limited closeness under specific conditions, entering such a relationship in contexts where it may lead to softening toward their false beliefs, admiration of their ways, or confusion in the hearts and minds, directly threatens the spiritual boundary required by al-Barā'.

6.7 Giving Dawah with Compassion

Giving dawah with compassion is a recommended expression of al-Walā' – loyalty to Islam and concern for others' guidance. It follows the prophetic model of calling people with wisdom, mercy, and sincerity, without compromising disavowal (al-Barā') of their false beliefs. Misunderstanding al-Barā' by showing hostility toward individuals, rather than their disbelief, undermines the message and contradicts the prophetic approach.

Loving guidance for others does not negate Barā'; it affirms loyalty to the truth by seeking its spread. The believer desires for others what he desires for himself – the light of Islam – while maintaining firm rejection of shirk. Compassionate dawah is not a dilution of Barā', but a powerful fulfilment of al-Walā' in its proper form.

6.8 Making dua for non-Muslims:

Making du'a for non-Muslims, particularly for their guidance and well-being, is not in contradiction with the principles of al-Barā'. Disassociating from disbelief does not require wishing harm upon individuals or refraining from supplicating for their guidance. Rather, the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and the practice of the early generations demonstrate a balanced approach – one that upholds disavowal of shirk while still expressing mercy and hope for the

hearts to be guided to the truth.

Abu Hurayrah (radīy Allāhu ‘anhu) narrated that when the tribe of Daws rejected the message, some of the Companions urged the Prophet ﷺ to invoke Allah against them. But instead, he ﷺ said:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِ دَوْسًا وَأُنْتَ بِهِمْ

“O Allah! Guide the people of Daws and bring them [to Islam].” (Sahih al-Bukhari 2937)

This incident clearly shows that the correct prophetic response to rejection was to seek guidance for the people, not destruction, as long as they were not actively waging war against Islam. It reflects the spirit of mercy with which dawah is to be delivered.

Several scholars from the early generations and classical jurists confirmed the permissibility of making such du‘ā’ for the non-Muslims:

- Ibrahim al-Nakha‘i said: “There is nothing wrong in saying to a Jew or a Christian: May Allah guide you.” (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 29833)
- Hasan al-Basri reportedly said that when offering condolences to a dhimmi, one may say: “May nothing befall you except that which is good.” (Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimmah 1/438)
- The Shāfi‘ī jurists stated in Hashiyat Nihayat al-Muhtaj (1/533) and Hashiyat Tuhfat al-Muhtaj (2/88): “It is permissible to offer supplication for a disbeliever, asking that he be granted good health and guidance.”
- Al-Munāwī said in Fayd al-Qadīr (1/345): “It is also permissible to offer supplication for a disbeliever, asking that

he be granted guidance, good health and well-being, but not forgiveness.”

- Imām Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal was asked about saying “May Allah bless you” to a Christian. He replied: “Yes; he may say: May Allah bless you – meaning with Islam.” (al-Adab al-Shar‘iyyah 1/369)

These statements show that asking Allah to bless, guide, or protect a non-Muslim – with the intention of calling them to Islam or softening their heart – is permissible and praiseworthy. However, asking for forgiveness for a disbeliever *who died upon disbelief* is not allowed, as the Qur‘an explicitly forbids it (cf. 9:113).

Therefore, avoiding all du‘ā’ for non-Muslims out of a false sense of Barā’ contradicts the prophetic methodology. Seeking guidance for them and wishing them well in a way that invites them to the truth is not only allowed, but reflects sound understanding and proper conduct in da‘wah.

7. Summary and A Practical Line of Action



This final section of the book serves as a conclusion to the discussion on al-Walā' wal-Barā'. Its purpose is twofold: to summarise the core principles covered throughout the book, and to outline a practical framework for implementing this foundational concept in individual and collective life. The aim is not only to understand the theory, but to act upon it with balance, clarity, and sincerity.

7.1 Importance of Correct Understanding and Avoiding Misconceptions:

We began our discussion in this book by explaining that understanding the concept of al-Walā' wal-Barā' in its correct form is essential for sound belief and upright practice. Equally important is safeguarding oneself from common misconceptions that distort its meaning – whether by neglecting it entirely or misapplying it in ways that contradict the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

7.2 How to Acquire Correct Understanding

To protect oneself from misguidance in this matter, one must seek knowledge with depth and discipline. This includes studying the context of the relevant āyāt, examining all related texts in totality rather than isolating individual verses or reports (avoiding tajzī), and connecting the Qur'an with the Sunnah and Sīrah rather than treating them as separate sources. The proper understanding of al-Walā' wal-Barā' also rests on following the scholars of the past

(aslāf) and the present and their interpretive legacy, rather than relying on one's own opinions or modern re-interpretations. Furthermore, fatawa must be approached with awareness of the circumstances in which they were given, and not applied blindly outside of their context.

7.3 Al-Walā' is As Important As al-Barā'

Maintaining balance is critical: al-Walā' and al-Barā' must go hand in hand, without exaggeration in either direction. Loyalty to the believers must be grounded in love, support, and solidarity, while disavowal of falsehood must be firm yet guided by wisdom and justice.

7.4 Implementing Al-Walā' wal-Barā' at Individual Level:

On an individual level, one must make a conscious plan for living al-Walā' wal-Barā' in daily life. This includes loving the believers, prioritising Muslim companionship, supporting Islamic causes, avoiding admiration of disbelief, staying away from harmful influences, and speaking the truth about kufr and shirk without fear or flattery. It also means holding emotional, social, and ideological closeness to Islam and those who follow it sincerely.

7.5 Implementing Al-Walā' wal-Barā' at Collective Level:

At the communal and state level, al-Walā' wal-Barā' must be established through the iqāmah (establishment) of the Dīn — where Islamic values, laws, and identities are upheld at all levels of governance and society. This cannot be achieved without knowledge, leadership, and long-term vision rooted in the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

7.6 Importance of Geo-Politics in the Diligent Practice of Al-Walā' wal-Barā' in Global Context:

Developing awareness of the global scene and geo-politics is also essential. The Qur'an itself draws attention to geopolitical developments, such as in the story of the Roman victory in Surah al-Rūm. Allah says:

وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ - بِنَصْرٍ مِّنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْزِيزٌ
الرَّحِيمُ

"And on that day the believers will rejoice – at the victory of Allah. He gives victory to whom He wills, and He is the Almighty, the Most Merciful" (al-Rūm 30:4–5).

The happiness of the believers at the Roman victory was not random, but rooted in an understanding of alliances, ideological proximity, and long-term benefit. This shows the importance of producing Muslims well-versed in geo-politics, history, and global dynamics – enabling wise application of al-Walā' wal-Barā' in the modern world.

7.7 Conclusion:

In short, al-Walā' wal-Barā' is not a theoretical concept confined to abstract theology; it is a living principle that must actively shape one's emotions, loyalties, relationships, and decisions – both at the personal and collective levels – in accordance with the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

We hope that this book has provided readers with a clear and accessible overview of the core requirements of al-Walā' wal-

Barā', and has inspired sincere reflection and positive action. May Allah ﷺ accept this effort, place barakah in it, make it a means of forgiveness for its author and his team, and a source of lasting guidance for all those who read it.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَابُ الرَّحِيمُ

رَبَّنَا لَا تُنْغِ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ

الْوَهَابُ

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعِلْهُ حُجَّةً لَنَا وَلَا تَجْعِلْهُ حُجَّةً عَلَيْنَا

Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed, You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. And turn to us in mercy – indeed, You are the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.

Our Lord, do not let our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from Yourself. Indeed, You are the Bestower.

O Allah, make this a proof in our favour and not a proof against us.



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